

Prayer in Moonlight

by A

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Summary: One of the most touching scenes in FF7, rendered into writing... (spoiler from the first disc, PG for blood)

Prayer in Moonlight

This is my little attempt at giving life to one of the most beautiful scenes of all time. I hope I managed to do it justice.

* * *

> <p> The chamber shone in the moonlight, each crystal pillar brilliant with the silver beams that filtered in from high above. The only noise was the echo of footsteps, intrusive in the peaceful silence, harsh and awkward in the ancient place. The footfalls were urgent and pressed, and the small group that caused them completely intent upon their goal, though only one of their number knew for whom they strove.<p>

Time was irrelevant in the moonlit chamber, and so it mattered little that the decent took a seeming eternity. The urgency was felt only in the mind of one, and it was he that pushed himself to the limit, forcing himself toward an event that seemed rigidly inevitable. His legs jolted with the rough contact of the steps, and he panted slightly from the exertion despite his excellent physical condition.

And suddenly, he came to a stop, startling those that followed behind him.

"Cloud?" asked a dark-haired young woman cautiously as she placed a hand on his shoulder. He didn't respond, training his mako blue eyes instead on the platform they'd come to stand before. Her gaze, curious, mimicked his own and she gasped quietly.

"Aeris..." His voice was barely a whisper, and the silence that followed was filled only by the quiet sound of the flower girl's

prayer.

And then...

-_flash_-

The sword was drawn above the head of the one called Cloud, glinting dangerously in the moonlight.

"No..." It came as a soft moan, a denial of his own actions. "No..." And he sank to his knees, trembling; the massive blade clattered to the ground. Desperately, he put a hand to his head, as though in an attempt to prevent something from reaching the surface and forcing its way out.

-_flash_-

"Cloud!" The voice that reached his mind belonged to Tifa, and it harbored barely contained alarm. "Cloud- he's here!"

The young man's brilliant eyes flared as they focused on the platform at the chamber's center, and he drew his breath in sharply at the sight he beheld. The flower girl still kneeled, bathed in moonlit radiance, head bowed as her lips mouthed silent words. Behind her, though, green eyes burning with hell fire, stood an imposing figure-the one that haunted fire-filled memories and lurked in the darkest shadows of unconsciousness. Sephiroth. The Great Sephiroth.

And without a word he raised his great sword, gleaming dull and cold beneath the moon, and without a word he thrust the blade into her. It reappeared on the other side, a bright spot of blood blossoming around the point, shockingly crimson against the faded pink of her dress.

Cloud stared, frozen and helpless, as the girl's lucid eyes widened almost imperceptibly with the pain. She pressed her lips together, though, fighting back a cry, as her aqua gaze searched out his face.

...And then, amazingly... she smiled. Hope was in that expression, hope and a little sadness, perhaps, that she wouldn't be able to see where the hope she had given the world was taken.

But then the blade was withdrawn, shattering with its exit the tentative smile, and time seemed to freeze around the flower girl as she fell to the ground. Blood seeped from her still form, marring the crystal purity of the chamber and the magical quality of the moonlight.

"Aeris!" The cry that wrenched itself from his lips was filled with the weight of a thousand thoughts, a thousand feelings. He was so intent on the girl lying dead on the ground that he didn't see the monster standing still behind her, blade slicked crimson with still-warm blood.

But when the haunting words

-_flash_-

You are... a puppet.....

-_flash_-

echoed in his mind, and a new monster descended from the heavens demanding blood, he was forced to notice.

* * *

> It was completely silent, now, in the ancient chamber; the light of the moon danced over the water and shone with amazing brilliance on the ethereal structures. All had left the ancient place of moonlight and prayers, all save one man, and a woman who would never again see day.<p> He held her tenderly as he stepped into the water, supporting her body with strong arms as he lay her into the waiting pool. Gently, then, he leaned forward, allowing his lips to brush hers in a gesture he had never dared while yet she lived.<p>

"Goodbye... Aeris....." It was a whisper, barely spoken. And then he stood, leaving behind the chamber and the woman inside, bathed forever in moonlight and surrounded by the echoes of her prayers.

End
file.